

Garrett Park Oral History Archives Tape

**Interview with Paul Erik Edlund
Resident, 10922 Kenilworth Avenue
Interviewer – Barbara Shidler
Assistant Interviewer – Lizzie Glidden-Boyle
Sides “A & B” - Tape 2 of 3
Interview Date – September 20, 1996**

The tape opens with the Edlund interview in progress. Mr. Edlund is talking about the placement of the stone plaque located at the corner of Waverly Avenue at the entrance to Penn Place.

Edlund – We said where we want it (the stone), he backed the truck up and a 3,000-pound stone – or whatever it was – came sliding off that truck and buried right in the mud. Uh, face down. Basically, he picked...It wasn't quite face down. It was on an angle like this. The face, he had already selected the north quarry to mount the round plaque on. And it was buried there. The man put the back truck down and brought over the sheet over to me to sign it. I signed it. I guess I gave him a check. He drove off. I said, "What are we going to do with it?" He (Constantine Seferlis) said, "We're going to have to put it up right." I said, "What do you mean? That's 3,000 pounds of stone!" "We'll get it up right" he said – I'll be right back.

So, he went home and he came back with a long pole – I don't know whether it was metal or wood – about 20 feet long with about four or five blocks of wood. Different sizes – 4x4, 2x4, 6x6. He said, "All right. I'm going to put this one block of wood underneath" – the big one. "And I want to get under with this long pole and when I get under it, pull it down and you - when it gets under, when you get it up you move it up. I'm going to move it only two inches." Or, something like that. "Then, we'll put another bigger block under it." I said, "OK."

So, he gets up and he walks with his hands up the pole and then pulls down on this 20-foot pole, using this block of wood as a fulcrum. Raises that stone up, I don't know, two inches. He repositions the pole. Does it again. And he did that – I don't know how many hours. He finally got that block of stone raised up to where it's supposed to be, where it is now. With its back toward Kensington. But it was 45 or 30 degrees when it was delivered. It was a fast delivery. And we were there the time. People went by, I was in a raincoat and he was in...it was pouring rain. He finally got that stupid stone up.

Shidler – Does anybody have a picture of that?

Edlund – No. There was so much pouring rain. I would have loved to have that myself. So, we got that stone in position and he took the blocks back home. He came back two days later and drilled holes in it and mounted the plaque, as he did over (unintelligible). But that was a memorable experience that I'll never forget. Seeing that stone slide off that truck and land in this slopping mud. Buried down there. It's never gong to be moved from where it is now because the base of it is in that mud (laughs).

Shidler - Did you have any, um, misadventures with the one up at the Town Hall?

Edlund – No, because what they did with that one – they had a crane. They had a what-do-you-call-it, one of these heavy rivet things. And I told them the side that I wanted it. So, they just moved it over and I stood there. They set it down into the ground. And they left it.

Shidler – That's all there was to it?

Edlund – No, there was no problem. He came over a few days later and worked on it and put the plaque on. But that was a memorable experience down there. Not for the guy who delivered it but for the guys who...

Shidler – When you ran for the Council a second time, when you worked for Bill (Prinz)...

Edlund – When I did what?

Shidler – When you worked under Bill. When you worked for the Council the second time...

Edlund – Oh, OK.

Shidler – What issues were you addressing? The Council?

Edlund – I think it'd be safer to go to the minutes for that one. I don't...I don't...

Shidler – You don't remember any wild, steamy screaming matches or anything?

Edlund – I remember some of those when I was Mayor.

Shidler – Well, yes. I do, too (laughs). But...

Edlund – No, Prinz was on the Council and he wasn't a wild, screaming type.

Shidler – No.

Edlund – I think George Payne was on the Council. He was always on the Council, publicly or off.

Shidler – Until...yeah.

Edlund – I was on the Council the second time. You'll have to look up who was on the Council. I don't remember. No, the two things I worked on when Bill was Mayor was the plaques, the archives. That was done when - I think -that was done while Bill was Mayor, wasn't it?

Shidler – I'm not sure. Sybil has told me but I'm not sure.

Edlund – Well, I'm sure of that because that's when we brought all the collection together from you and George Payne and all the people that had collected material. Wasn't that when Bill Prinz was Mayor?

Shidler – Well, Warren (Johnston) had left a great load of stuff. I don't know where that was.

Edlund – I got stuff from Warren, from his wife, up in Maine. What she sent down had no relevance to Garrett Park.

Shidler – But before they moved, didn't Warren contribute the Bugles and a bunch of other stuff?

Edlund – He may have but I don't remember what the process was. I thought that I'd, I thought that the archives were set up by me with Sybil Griffin when I was a Council member. The two things I definitely remember were the plaques and the scrapbook. Uh, those were done. The scrapbook was done in '88, wasn't it?

Shidler – Well, you did it.

Edlund – The scrapbook was done in '88. It was the 90th birthday of the Town. So, I remember doing that when Bill Prinz was Mayor. And he became, he was Mayor until I became Mayor in '90. I don't remember...

Shidler – Given that, did you take it just so that it would be finished? How did you end up doing the scrapbook? I know George was supposed to do it for umpteen years.

Edlund – I think I probably volunteered. I wouldn't want to bet all the money in Garrett Park. I think I volunteered but I don't remember whether there was a discussion that came up about it – "Would we do it?" – I don't remember that. Whether there was a discussion on Town Council. I don't remember that at all. I know I was eager to do it. I remember saying to somebody, "I'll do it but I'll do it by myself." I wasn't going to be on a committee to do it because I said if I did it myself, I could do it. I wouldn't get in a committee and spend time. I just don't like...I like to go ahead and do something. That can be a strong point. That can be a weak point. Doesn't make any difference to me what it is. That's the way I am. But I said I'd go ahead and do it. And so, I think he said, "Go ahead." I don't know whether they put it to a Council vote or not. At that – I did come back to the Council when I got a cost for it because the cost was...when I finally got to the point of printing it, the cost was – I think - \$14,000.

Shidler – Did they do that the same way they did the History when we did this? The Council told me, "We will pay for it. Whatever money we make back – we know we won't cover the cost. But we will pay for it."

Edlund – I think they set the cost at \$15.00 a copy. So, we printed 1,000 copies for \$14,000 printing cost and if we sold every copy, which we know we don't do and never will – if we sold all 1,000 we'd get \$15,000 back. So that's the basis. I think the Council agreed on the \$15.00. They've been selling some lately – not for \$15.00. But that's... I don't worry about that.

Glidden-Boyle – As Mayor, what were some of the things that you did that were the highest achievements that you're the most proud about?

Shidler – Wait a minute. Stop.

Tape stops.

Shidler - I was in college when the guys started coming back and some of them, they didn't know there was a world outside of the...

Glidden-Boyle – Foxhole.

Edlund – I was influenced, I think, also by a couple of friends I made in bombardiers that I went around with. And one enlisted in the Service that he was freshman at Amherst. And the other was a freshman at Cornell. They both completed a semester before they enlisted. And I went around with them. They just happened to...well, one of the reasons I went around with them because you usually went around – well, at least I did – with people who's names became with something close to your name.

Shidler – Yes, because that's where you were...

Edlund – Because you were barracked alphabetically. So, I went around with people who's – my name is E – I went around with people named "E", or ended in "E" or "G" because they were bunked next to you on both sides. So, both these fellows were in that. One of them was killed. One of them came back. In fact, the one from Amherst, when I went into Yale in July of '45 to start my college life, I was filling out some forms. And I heard this fellow yell across the room, "Hey, Paul!" I turned around at this bombardier that I had gone around with in this country, gone overseas to finish mission and enrolled in Yale also. He's the one who had a semester in Amherst.

Glidden-Boyle – But in your day - referring to you son – who came home. In your day, instead of coming home you went into the Service.

Edlund – Well, I actually...I didn't go. Well, that's true in many cases. In my case, I had actually gone to work and I worked about three years - four in the Service - after getting out of high school. And, in my case, it was a little bit different because of my parents. My father got transferred, not transferred, he got promoted to another company. He was working in Fayetteville and he got promoted. He got a job in Lakewood, Ohio, outside of Cleveland. So, they moved there and at that time I knew I was going in the Service and I didn't go with them. So, I stayed there and lived, boarded in a boarding house. And I boarded there for about a year or so until I went into the Service. But, yeah, that's true of a lot of people who went home after the Service.

Shidler – All right. Let's go back to where we left off yesterday. I never did properly get this tape going. This is an interview...

Edlund – You mean this last cassette?

Shidler – Yes. I didn't get the first one going properly. This is September the 20th and 21st, 1996. Barbara Shidler and Lizzie Boyle are interviewing Mayor, former Mayor Paul Edlund of Garrett Park. We are up to his mayoralty and the question where we left yesterday was, "What were the most significant things you did as Mayor?" Now, I have a couple of things I want to ask you about but you tell me first. You told us about the plaques.

Edlund – I beg your pardon?

Shidler – You told us about the plaques.

Edlund – Yeah, that was done as a Councilperson.

Shidler – A Councilperson. And the archives, I think. All right, take us into your mayoralty.

Edlund – I actually was not thinking of running for Mayor, because I enjoyed the work I was doing on the Council. I felt I had Bill Prinz gave me a great deal of legal edge and I think ideally that's the way it ought to work. Uh, so, when I proposed things, I suggested to him and he said, "Sure, go ahead." And I was retired and I could afford to do it, could afford the time to do it and enjoyed doing it.

I was reluctant to run for Mayor, and I think the reason I ran for Mayor... I was out for a walk one night and I ran into Peggy Pratt. And we walked and she got talking and Bill indicated that he'd be finished in whatever time. And she said, "Why don't you run?" Or something like that. And I said, "No, I don't really want to do that." I thought about it and then I decided to go talk to Bill Prinz about it. And I sat down and had a long talk with him. And I really didn't (unintelligible because recorder is being moved).

Shidler – Go on. I just want to get (unintelligible).

Edlund - I wasn't sure I...I had never even thought about running. I enjoyed what I was doing. I had a lot of things to do and I...so, I talked to Bill Prinz and he said, "Sure, you should do that" basically. So, I thought about running and I ran, uh, for it. Even today, I have a feeling that I got a lot more done as a Councilman than I did as Mayor. Because if you have the time, well, the Mayor, like I said, the Mayor is, well...basically a figurehead. And the things I did get done in the town were because I felt the council members were not doing it. I wasn't patient enough or diplomatic enough or whatever it was to (unintelligible). They were all working; I think they were all working except for Barbara Frost. She had other activities – full-time paid work.

So, the things I got involved in were the two storm drains I got built and redoing Strathmore and Oxford. Those were not getting done. They had to be done. The storm drains – we had two storm drains. One went through Barbara Frost's property and one down by Penn Place. They were not functioning and they had to be repaired. And, they were not getting done. So, I said to the Council, I said, "Alright, I'll take it over." So, I forgot if he resigned. I think he resigned.

Shidler – I think so.

Edlund – He resigned because he said it was too much.

Shidler – I think he went freelance or something at that time.

Edlund – Yeah, he became a freelance writer and he ended up being (unintelligible). But he just said he couldn't devote the time to it and obviously, he couldn't because these things weren't getting done. So, I took them over and told the Council that I was putting them under my responsibility. Now, I don't know if that was the right thing to do or not. Uh, basically had I been smarter or something I would have delegated it to somebody and got it done. But, I was known at the Library of Congress as a master in the art of delegating work and getting work done by people who didn't want to do it.

Shidler – (Laughing).

Edlund – I had people at the Library of Congress, they were the finest supervisors I ever had. Because, well of course down there, they were working for a living and they were also working to get promoted.

Shidler – Right.

Edlund – And, so, if you gave them an assignment and they didn't do it, well, my memory is as good as anybody else's. So, I was known as one of the master supervisors at the Library of Congress. I got a lot of work done because I relied on the people who worked for me to do it and, uh, that's the way it worked. It works beautifully if you've got people who are going to get off the stool and do it.

But I understand better now when people are assigned to it and work for a full-time living. They have higher priorities. And I told that to him. I wrote him a long letter and said I apologized for my emotional outbreak on the Council and said I understood that your first priority is your work, the second is your house...the second is your wife and family, the third is your house. I said, "If you don't have time for the town, I understand." And I think we're on good terms now. We've talked on the street. I did get quite emotional on the Council meeting and I'm sorry. But, the work wasn't getting done and the storm drain wasn't getting repaired and Barbara Frost – water was pouring on her front. So, I went ahead and got contracts, got bids, for repairing that work with Chester Environmental.

Both those jobs, all three of those jobs...I met with the men regularly. And we got those jobs done. We got a bid on repairing the storm drain and going through Barbara Frost's property and (another resident's) property. And we got the storm drain rebuilt down by Penn Place. And then we got the storm drain repaired at Kenilworth. And that was...so those three jobs cost the town over \$200,000, which was an enormous amount of money. But there wasn't any choice.

Kenilworth Avenue - I was being bugged by the supervisor of the school bus drivers, uh, because the roads were...Kenilworth Avenue was filled with horrible potholes. The school bus had to traverse somewhere or other and the school bus driver was reporting it back to his boss and his boss talked to me. And then, I met with the school principal, Kathy Bainbridge. And finally, we got Scott Recinos, drew up the plans and I got the bid and got approval of the contract.

And then we got into Strathmore and found out that, uh...we were originally going to contract to resurface it – grind down the top, the asphalt and put a new surface on it. When they did that they found out there was nothing there to resurface. So, they had to build a road over it. And I'm sure that's going to be true with a lot of roads in town. There's nothing there to go over. So, it's going to be a lot more expensive than we have anticipated. So, we had already started Kenilworth Avenue and Oxford. Well, they stopped work. They said the original contract said we have to resurface and you've got to rebuild. So, for a month there, nothing happened. And this was in October. Winter was coming on and we were over a barrel. So, we had to renegotiate the contract. They knocked out a portion of the contract to rebuild part of Montrose. Not rebuild – patch.

Shidler – Right, right.

Edlund – So, we were in a barrel. And originally, we put out the bid and we and we got...we put out the bid on Strathmore and Oxford and there were - I think - there were five contractors. And we wanted to get it done, I think, in the summertime. We only got one bid. They couldn't do it in the summertime. Summertime is when they make money. And also, they're not really that bloody interested in \$150,000 jobs. Well, you can pave Rockville Pike for, like \$2 million. So, paving roads is an expensive project. Rebuilding is of course, too. So, we finally got that done.

The school - Kathy Bainbridge and the PTA – I remember them. They wanted to...Do you want the pillow? That's the chair. Uh, the PTA official, the president and so forth...they wanted to postpone it, not do it. They wanted to do it when school was out. I said, "We don't have any choice. We could go all winter and it's going to be ten times worse than it is now in the spring, so we have to go ahead." So, we went ahead and did it. I got that done. So, those were the three things that I think were quite significant, as far as I'm concerned.

Shidler – The drain at the end of Kenilworth, was that before you? I know it was after you. But the original rebuilding of that...was that before your Council period?

Edlund – Yes, that was in...that was when I was Mayor. Uh, that whole end of Kenilworth is a mess, it's been a mess since the day it was made. And I don't know if anybody's ever going to solve it. Uh...

Glidden-Boyle - Are you talking about the lower end?

Edlund – The lower end, where the two new houses have been built on the left.

Glidden-Boyle – Beyond your house?

Edlund – Hmm?

Shidler – Beyond your old house, yes.

Glidden-Boyle – Yes. I walked by it yesterday. Your two houses are my favorite houses, so far. Your old houses in the village.

Shidler – The town. It's incorporated. We have to call it a town.

Glidden-Boyle – Right.

Edlund – Well, it's a historic resource. It's one of the...the County Historic Preservation Committee selected it, made it a historic resource. The guy who - fortunately for the town - the man who's in it has a pocketbook without a bottom in it and he's restoring it. That's great. As long as somebody else's money is in it I don't have a problem. Nope, I don't have a problem. I'm 100% for it.

Glidden-Boyle – When was that house built?

Edlund – 1891. It was...

Glidden-Boyle – Is that when most of the houses were built?

Shidler – If you open that book to the place in the back where the pictures are of the houses, there's a schematic.

Edlund – Many of them were built. Do you want to read my article? Do you have a telephone directory?

Shidler – Yeah. The point is, I just wanted to show you...

Edlund – Do you want this on now?

Shidler – Yes, why not? In this book, Lizzie, there is a schematic of the population and houses, which Dave Almy and I dreamed up for this. There were, before we were incorporated, 37 houses that we know of.

Glidden-Boyle – Oh, interesting!

Shidler – And what Dave tried to do was to make something that looked more or less of the style being built in that decade. Now, Paul has another article here, in the telephone directory.

Edlund – This is Garrett Park in 1898. It gives you, that's in the phone book. You don't have to read it now. It's (unintelligible).

Shidler – But there were...

Edlund – Do you have the phone book?

Shidler – That's his old house. It's one of the old houses (laughs). But did that drain system at the top of Kenilworth and Donnelly's Hill (Argyle Avenue) and down in front of Joe White's...was that Mr. Hill's creation? Initially, that is?

Edlund – That I don't know. The drain system that is there now was put in I think. Allen Dittman was the Council member at the time that drain was put in - the one that's there now. The real fancy one that they dug down 15 - 20 feet. That was there and, of course, it was put down without regard to where the streets there now are - or where the street now is, where it was theoretically according to the Master Plan. So, that, yes, that was during my administration as Mayor that the "Shorb business", you know, that's what you're referring to.

Shidler – Yeah. It started way back under you? And it's still going on?

Edlund – Oh, it will go on forever. It will go on as long as that street is in the condition that it is today. I know of no person in town who wants that street fixed. I think that the man next to Shorb's, Joe May, he would love to have the water...he's now made a curb out of old railroad ties, which I had done out front. I didn't use old railroad ties. I used specially treated timber...

Shidler – Yes, I know.

Edlund – But, uh, no I don't envision that situation being solved until the town decides to go ahead and put in a decent...

Shidler – A proper street.

Edlund – A proper street. And I don't see that. The cost of doing it will, I guess, be enormous. What you'd also have to do is run that street over on to a large segment of Joe May's property and over Shorb's property. Shorb's...

Shidler – It's not their property. It's town property.

Edlund – No, I mean, what...I just...you can't see my quotation marks.

Shidler – Well, I understand it, yes.

Edlund – Joe May...of course, he was quite upset about the whole business. Now, we finally got, before I left we got a plaque made at uh, Chris Keller's suggestion, a brass plaque to put down on the drive way, the May's driveway, pointing to where the manhole is, which is covered up. The town manhole is covered up.

Shidler – I know they had a tough time finding it.

Edlund – Uh hum?

Shidler – They had a tough time finding it.

Edlund – A tough time finding it. Well, they finally found it. They know where it is. So, Chris Keller suggested before I left we got a plaque to put in Joe May's driveway Saying "Town manhole cover 3 feet down", which I did. I got it made at Lamb Seal and Stencil, the same people who made the plaques. And I gave it to Butch to put a couple of projectional (unintelligible) on it. I don't know if he's done it or not since or whether he...Joe May was very upset about this whole thing. I think he was basically upset about buying property and (unintelligible). He wrote a strong letter one day to the town and basically...I don't know what words he used...but he's never had the place he lived in before bothered him like this. He used some strong words. I wrote back to him and said, "Look, it's the town's property. I can't help the way your house is built and I can't help with anything else."

Shidler – "You should not be complaining to me, but to the builder."

Edlund – Yeah, yeah. The builder put it down there and, uh...well, we don't need to talk about the builder.

Shidler – No, but that is, that has been, check me if I'm wrong, a constant of every administration since the town began.

Edlund – Oh, sure. Well, I don't know what else when the town began. That business down there came along much later than the beginning of town. Those houses are all, what, 1940 or '50? The only house down there that was there a fairly long time. I don't know how long that would have been.

Shidler – Ottenweils built that, right?

Edlund – Well, that was probably a little old dirt road for many, many years and then they went down and slapped-ass job of throwing a few buckets of asphalt on it. And when you do that, then you'll – it's never going to get fixed unless you start over again.

Shidler – The way you did at this end of Kenilworth.

Edlund – Sure. And I don't think you'll ever, I don't think...oh, well, I'm guessing...that no one will ever tackle that problem because the people down there are not unhappy with it, they're not...by the road I mean. Uh, maybe, you might get some people who say, "Hey, I want this road built." And if that's the case, go ahead and build it and assess them.

Shidler – Um hum.

Edlund – Uh, the way we did over on Oxford Street. Make them pay for it.

Shidler – Um hum.

Edlund – I don't foresee that happening but then, I don't predict the future. I don't have any crystal ball or anything else.

Shidler – But you did not do that drain?

Edlund – No, Alan Dittman did that drain.

Shidler – That preceded your mayoralty.

Edlund – Oh, yeah. Alan Dittman, I'm pretty sure Alan Dittman was in charge of that job. Because he was in charge of streets and roads. I think he did that one and he did Waverly with those wavy curves and...

Shidler – Oh...

Edlund – And he was in charge of streets and roads. He was the one...well; I'm not going to talk about that. Uh, no, I don't, the only time I got into it was when Jeremy (Lichtenstein) built the two houses and then Shorb wanted to pay for his own crossing road maintenance sign, easement, easement sign. So, it was his business.

Shidler – Now you were involved, much involved, in the zoning battles. Right?

Edlund – What do you mean, the “zoning battles”? You mean the...

Shidler – The Overlay.

Edlund – Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. I’m not...I’m not...after Bob Reinhardt was defeated from the last election; I called him and asked to meet with him. I said I wanted to talk. And I went down there...Karen wandered out. Went down there. They were just finishing breakfast. And I went in and said, “I just wanted to say a few words to you.” And I told him at that time, “Look, the four significant events in the history of town in dealing with over- development were the 10-foot set back in 1920, the right to keep Porcupine Woods from being townhouses in 1950, the Overlay Zone and the Set Back.” And I said, “You are responsible for 50% of that.”

Shidler – That’s right. Two out of four.

Edlund – And now, whether those are going to stick up...you know, stay in place, I’m not sure. Um, I got involved with the Overlay Zone at the time of the attorney’s reviewing of the Garrett Park Master Plan. They review master plans all the time. There were master plans...what they are...what they desire or hope to do. What line will the development take? And, it came to Garrett Park-North Bethesda Master Plan. Back up a bit. Before, when Bill Prinz left, he was on the Committee, which was developing. In fact, he was Chairperson on the Committee.

Shidler – Oh, I didn’t know that.

Edlund – He was Chairperson on the panel and he left to go to New England, to go to Cape Cod. He recommended that I take his place. Well, I took his place on the Committee. They had done most of the work. And I wasn’t the Chairperson. At that stage, they had just come to Garrett...I’m not sure of the exact sequence that they had come to Garrett Park as to what they were going to do. And I don’t remember all.

Bob Reinhardt was in charge of building permits at that time. And, uh, he was liaison, Committee liaison, with Park and Planning. I don’t remember all the details. But anyway, he – as an architect - he came up with the idea. Well, at that time we had three different zoning standards in Garrett Park. We had R-90, R-60 and what we called “A lots”. And three different sets of zoning standards, which set up a various waste of time with no relationship to each other. Some allowed this and some allowed that and some allowed this. And I think it was his idea, well, we ought to have a uniform system. And the only way to get a uniform system, he came up with it, was overlay zones. And he had been familiar with it because overlay zones are used when you have, let’s see, you have an office building and the thing is zoned for whatever an office is zoned for and you want to put some stores along, in the ground floor of this and then you do this by overlays – I hope I have this is correct – you do this by an overlay zone. To include these in or put them over the original zoning clause and include these stores.

So, he came up with the idea of an overlay zone for the Town of Garrett Park, which would make one set of zoning standards apply. You wouldn't go back and repeal the R-90, R-60, A lot. You'd just code the overlay zone and the rationale was that this was an old, historic district with nice historic places and the rationale is we're doing this as a means of protecting the Town. There's probably a lot more, I'm sure it's a lot more complicated than I'm saying.

So, he came up with the idea and he worked with Park and Planning. They bought the idea and he testified before Park and Planning and they bought the idea. They recommended it to the County Council, yeah, the County Council. And Nancy Floreen was on the planning board. They agreed on it 100% - a great idea. It imposed now one set of zoning standards which enabled people in town to build, and people who owned houses to put additions on them and people to build new houses and follow one set of zoning standards. And that would help prevent overbuilding in town and tearing down small houses and putting up...tearing down a Chevy house and putting up an \$800,000 house in its place.

Glidden-Boyle – Is that how you were able to hold back the development of Porcupine Woods?

Edlund – No, no. Porcupine Woods was back in the 1950's. What we're talking about now is in the 1990's. Porcupine Woods was a different story. Porcupine Woods was, uh...

Glidden-Boyle – And you were Mayor then when that was stopped. Is that right?

Shidler - No, no. Not Porcupine Woods.

Edlund - Porcupine Woods was in the 1950's. I didn't live...I guess I did live in town. Porcupine Woods was a different case. Porcupine Woods was a case where the County had actually approved a rezoning of Porcupine Woods to build townhouses. The County approved it and the Town opposed it. And we lost. And we then went to seek, eventually went to seek a grant to buy it. It's a what-do-you-call-it?

Shidler – HUD. HUD grant. Open Space...

Edlund – Open Space. And so we bought Porcupine Woods from the man who owned it and was going to put up 30-some odd townhouses there, which would have been 60-some cars...at least 60. No, so that was a different time. We bought that land and then it became town property and...

Glidden-Boyle – Did the whole town buy it?

Shidler – Yes.

Glidden-Boyle – In other words, part of it came out of the treasury and then other people contributed?

Shidler – No, no. Town budget.

Edlund – Town budget. We got a grant from HUD. No, we didn't pay at all. But that was a totally different animal. That was 40 years before all this.

So, I testified, testified in front of the Park and Planning Board and they approved and it went to the County Council. I testified a couple of times there. Bob Reinhardt also testified. And the County Council finally bought it. And I remember as they voted to approve it, Betty Anne Krahne saying, "This is one very ingenious way of protecting the town" - or something. So, the Overlay Zone was essentially put into effect. And then, uh, I've forgotten now how the set back ordinance came to be.

Shidler – Basically, because Jeremy wanted to tear down the "haunted house" and build a big one. And the Women's Club was partly responsible for screeching about that. And in order, it had something to do with...I shouldn't talk about this because I haven't thought about it for a while and I'm not clear on the details.

Edlund – Well, I guess you probably can argue...maybe the reason we did it because it took a fairly long time to get the Overlay Zone...

Shidler – It's possible.

Edlund – Personally, I don't think the Overlay Zone was in effect at that time. I don't...

Shidler – It took a couple of years, didn't it? From the time that it was proposed, we had a couple of public meetings I know. They had a big visual up on the stage showing what the town could look like if nothing were done, given what was in place at the time. And then what the town could look like if the Overlay were accepted and it was a very loud public meeting, as I recall.

Edlund – I think it was also a continuing suspicion of the County. Uh...

Shidler – Not...**DEEP** suspicion of the County.

Edlund – Yeah. Uh, because the Overlay Zone would be administered by a County agency. And you'd go through, you'd go through a review process. You'd have an appeals process and I think it was (unintelligible) in mind also, I'm sure it was in Bob Reinhardt's, that if we had control over it, then that's closer to home. We would make sure. And I'm sure somebody could argue, I'm sure maybe already argued, I don't know. I have a feeling that the...well, anyway. Uh, so I think the feeling was "Let's get more control within our own hands", which is fine if your own hands work. Uh, so that was...those four things I mentioned; I consider...well, I consider those two things very important things in my administration.

Shidler – Didn't you appoint Bob to this Committee?

Edlund – Oh, yeah. No, I have great admiration for Bob.

Shidler – This was your baby, in effect?

Edlund – What was?

Shidler – The Overlay.

Edlund – No, no, no, no, no. I had nothing to do with it. It was Bob Reinhardt's. He was on the...

Shidler – You mean that started before you put him in charge locally? He had already started talking about it?

Edlund – No, no, no, no, no, no, no. He didn't even think about it until he got in on the Committee and working (sic) with it. And he became aware of the fact that (unintelligible word). And I'm not sure what his thought processes were. No, the Overlay Zone...I wouldn't have known what it had meant if anybody had mentioned it. No, he gets credit for it. Uh, and he...I appointed him to work, well, it was part of his job, to work with the County with the, uh, Park and Planning Board to be on the North Bethesda-Garrett Park Master Plan. I was the liaison with him but he's not with the...there are a couple of people over there on the planning side. He's worked regularly with them. He spent an awful lot of time there. Uh, and he came up with the idea, which he suggested to me. I said, "Sounds great to me. Talk it over."

Glidden-Boyle – Here again is your ability to designate and get things done.

Edlund – Oh, it's not only a great idea I said, "Go ahead and pursue it!" There's no reason...I didn't know anything about. I'm not an architect. No, no, I'm... I'm perfectly willing and eager to (unintelligible) in other areas. And, uh, somebody else has a good idea, why not pursue it? And he pursued it with the working staff at Park and Planning and they thought it was a great idea. And, eventually, they worked it up. They spent a lot of time. And he's appreciated in this town as far as I'm concerned (unintelligible) anywhere near it.

Shidler – I feel that, too.

Edlund – He's sometimes not as subtle perhaps. Uh, but no I have great...

Shidler – Somebody was arguing with me one day about personalities and I unloaded my favorite opinion, which is all politics is personalities and why should we pretend that it doesn't happen (laughing) because...

Edlund – He and I, he and I...he has strong ideas. And he was willing to defend them. And I never disagreed with his ideas. I thought they were fabulous. I never heard of...I'm not an architect. I'm an historian who reads books. I don't know anything other than what's practical.

Glidden-Boyle – Is he still living here?

Shidler – Yeah, I'll introduce you to him. Uh, at this moment, we operate again under two sets of standards, don't we? The Overlay and the Set Back?

Edlund – They're still in effect.

Shidler – So, we're back to more than one standard, which the Overlay was meant to address. Am I wrong?

Edlund – Uh...I have to talk to Bob Reinhardt about that. I know there's a sentiment to have the town Set Back ordinance changed or altered.

Shidler – That was very clear in the last election.

Edlund – I have a feeling that was one of the underlying issues in the last campaign.

Shidler – Quite so, quite so.

Edlund – And I have a feeling that, uh, that, well, they do have a Committee - Peggy Pratt and...

Shidler – Well, actually, the Committee is charged with...

Edlund – They're charged with the policy.

Shidler – With the policy of seeing if it's time to get rid of it.

Edlund – That's right. But that's not my business.

Shidler – No, no, no.

Edlund – And, uh, but, I can do it as...you have two of them on there...two sets of regulations to go through. Even if there are minor differences, it will still hold back some developers and what they might want to do. But, I'm not the professional in terms of what zoning requirements are. But I think the reason for the Set Back ordinance is that we wanted to have control of the County by forcing the County...

Shidler – Here. At home...

Edlund – Yeah. That we would have people in town who would view this and turn down or do according to our regulations. Whether that's essential in the long run, I wouldn't be able to (unintelligible).

Glidden-Boyle - Do you have to be an incorporated town for that to happen? Because where I moved from in Chevy Chase - Chevy Chase village is its own incorporated...

Edlund – Was it incorporated or was it County tax?

Shidler – Chevy Chase 4 is incorporated, isn't it? District 4?

Glidden-Boyle – Subsequently to Chevy Chase Village, which has been incorporated since...for the last 100 years. But just to avoid what Porcupine Woods, you can't go to the County before it's passed through the Village.

Edlund – Can't go to the County for what?

Glidden-Boyle – For any building or anything. Any variance or anything.

Edlund – In Chevy Chase Village?

Glidden-Boyle – Um hum.

Edlund – Well, we have to get a building permit from the County. Sure.

Glidden-Boyle – No, well yes. But you have to get two. And you have to get it first from the Village in order to go to the County.

Shidler – We do that. You have to have a Garrett Park permit as well as a County permit.

Edlund – Yeah, we have a Garrett Park building permit.

Glidden-Boyle – And you can do that without being incorporated? Then how did the builder get to...

Edlund – I don't know about not being incorporated. I have no idea. I've only lived...I don't have any idea. We have our own...well, wait a minute, wait a minute. Also, the reasons - I must be asleep - the reason we set up this Set Back ordinance was in response to the State Legislature.

Shidler – That's right, that's right, that's right...

Edlund – Which passed a law authorizing, uh, municipalities to have their own stricter set back requirements than the County in which they're located. That was the reason it was passed. Because, actually that law was passed...I testified in Annapolis in favor of that law. That's an important...that's the critical element here. The State Legislature passed this bill – I don't know the name of it or the number right now - which authorized the incorporated municipalities like Garrett Park to have stricter building set back requirements than the County. So that authorized us to set up stricter set back requirements, which we did through Bob Reinhardt's efforts in the Town to approve all that.

So that is basically how we now have stricter set back requirements than the County does. So that's the rationale for having this as well as the Set Back/Overlay Zone because this gives us better control of our development than the County's rules. How they differ...well, you know, they differ in a number of respects. I won't get into the differences. I'd probably get it wrong anyway. There are several differences and I'm not sure of all. That's the reason we did it. I forgot I testified in favor of that bill in Annapolis.

Shidler – There's another, there's another point at this time that we could discuss in terms of trying to have our own control over our town and that is the testimony that you did before the Historic Preservation Committee when we were trying to keep from being designated a Historic District. Isn't that right? Didn't you testify in the County before we got locked into this ridiculous system of...

Edlund – I guess over in front of the Historic Preservation Committee on Georgia Avenue.

Shidler – Yeah, Park and Planning.

Edlund – Park and Planning building. Uh, I guess I testified against being made into a Historic District.

Shidler – That's right.

Edlund - What was your question?

Shidler – Why? I mean, I know why but explain it for the tape.

Edlund – Well, there was the same old anti-County sentiment or feeling or whatever you want to call it – prejudice or bias or hatred or whatever it is - that we didn't trust the County. And a lot of it stemmed back to the Porcupine Woods business where the County rezoned Porcupine Woods to 32 apartment houses or townhouses. And, that's where it comes from. There were still eternally, I don't really (unintelligible) right now regulations suspicious of the County's uh...Now that gets all back into the difference of opinion between Counties and incorporated towns.

Incorporated...if you're in a County job, an incorporated town is a pain in the butt to you because you have to go around them or through them or over them or under them or whatever you can do to get something done. And villages like Garrett Park are in their way. If you want to expand Strathmore Avenue and make it four lanes, you're going to have to go through a long difficult legal process with the people of Garrett Park, I'm guessing, because you're going through a historic, designated historic town.

So, that's the whole thing – suspicion of County. When I testified before them, was the fact that we had run things pretty damn well to preserve Town for 100 years. We didn't need the Historic Preservation Commission. When I testified before that in Annapolis, also, I went down to Annapolis to testify for it and I testified before the County Council and they said when I got through at the County Council they said, "We're sorry Mr. Edlund but it's the law of the County." And that was the end of it. And they voted 8 to 1 that we would be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission. So, when they said that, that seemed to be what it was. The end. There was nothing I could do. It was County law and they were...I asked for exceptions on the basis of past record and they said, basically, "If we give you an exception, we'll have to give 45 other places an exception." And I can't argue with that logic or that legality.

So, I went before...I went...when I...I think it was when I testified before the Committee in Annapolis. And I carried with me 15 copies of the scrapbook. I didn't make a nickel on any of them. I passed them off to each of the members of the Committee before hand. And they gave me...I asked for a (unintelligible) for an exemption to the provision for the County Historic Preservation or whatever because we had been good people, good boys and girls in the past. The chairperson came over. She was very sympathetic and said, "We understand. I've been to the town. It's a lovely town but if we make an exception for you the walls come tumbling down." So, no, I testified about that several times.

Shidler – Well, then when we got it there was this crazy jigsaw, which was in violation of preservation rules.

Edlund – What do you mean by the term "crazy jigsaw"?

Shidler – Well, this little piece is historic and then the rest of it isn't. And this house is historic and this house is historic.

Edlund – Well, what they did was obviously compromise – what all governments do. If you're looking for a perfect solution from any government – from town, local, state or federal government – you won't get a perfect solution. You'll get a compromise. And I'm guessing that was a compromise they worked out. They didn't want to include a whole bunch of areas. I'm sure they did a lot of sweating over it before they finally got it. "Compromise" is not a very popular word with American voters.

Shidler – No.

Edlund – But it's a 100% fact of life in politics. You give me a paragraph out here, I'll put one right there, it's over there and you end up getting a lot of (unintelligible) you've never seen (laughs).

Shidler – Did you have anything to do with the new railroad waiting room?

Edlund – Oh, yeah.

Shidler – That's what I thought. Tell me about that.

Edlund – Dick Pratt, uh...that was when I was on the Council. Yeah, I was on the Council.

Shidler – Yeah, I think so.

Edlund – Dick Pratt came to the Council and told that he'd learned of a railroad waiting room over in Landover that was going to be torn down and would the Town be interested in it. And, gee, I volunteered - I don't know if I was appointed. He probably asked me if I would do it and so I said, "Sure." So I went over and looked at it with Dick, took photographs of it and came back and did a referendum to have it brought back here. And erected it down where it is. And then somehow I heard about the Montgomery County Conservation Corps, uh, which does all kinds of jobs. They train young people just out of high school in carpentry and masonry and all that stuff. And so, I met with the man who's the head of the group of workers and, eventually arranged to have them come out and they went over to Landover and disassembled it and brought it over here. We put in a foundation and assembled it on the foundation. They had previously done the band concert stand over there at Strathmore Hall.

Shidler – Oh, they did build the gazebo?

Edlund – Yeah, the Civilian Conservation Corps of Montgomery County. They built that. I think that was a job they did not too long before they did this one. They had about 12 males...they were all males at that time. Probably 18 or 19. I don't know how they got the names, whether they were volunteers. They paid them something. They taught them a trade – how to be a carpenter, a mason. In this case, they built that bandstand as you go toward Metro. They built that.

Shidler – Sure, that's the children's theatre.

Edlund – That's the children's theatre?

Shidler – Yup. They use it all the time.

Edlund – So, they brought this back and assembled it. Then I tried to get a volunteer crew to paint it and two other people besides myself showed up. So, it was an overwhelming response to my request for volunteers (laughs). So, and it ended up by being painted mostly by a town workman. He had a strange last name...

Shidler – Let's not discuss that. A more inappropriate last name never existed (laughs).

Edlund – Anyway, since that time, since that time, Butch Frost has repainted it. He did a fabulous job painting it. Yeah, I was responsible. Then again, I got the plaque made. I got the plaque done. I seem to be a plaque person. I ought to be hired in the dentistry business. But, so I got the plaque made and put it up on the station. So, I'm giving credit to the Montgomery County Conservation Corps for bringing it over. The stones that are inside it. Have you been inside it?

Shidler – No (laughing). Actually, I haven't.

Glidden-Boyle – The waiting room? I've walked past it.

Edlund – Inside there are – two, three, four – there are six of these large concrete slabs. Rectangles. Must be 24 by 24. Having wandered down on the railroad tracks one day after the (unintelligible) was purchased by Bill Millard. The old Chisholm property. They had a lot of stuff of Haile Chisholm's. He collected everything.

Shidler – Everything, yes.

Edlund – Partly usable and some usable. And he had a whole stack of these concrete slabs. And I asked Bill Millard if I could have them for the waiting room. He said, "Yeah, sure. Where do you want them?" So, I showed him and he said he'd bring them down. I don't know whether they were trucked. They were very heavy slabs. And brought them up and put them in the waiting room on the floor with space between them. And then I got bags of, uh, essentially gravel, which he put in between. So, I think that was one of my great accomplishments – the floor in the waiting room of the train station.

Shidler – Sounds good. When you first came in '58 was the old station still standing? When did it come down?

Edlund – Uh, it was there when I came in '59 or '60. I can't exactly identify if it was '59 or '60. Uh, it was still there. Yeah, the old railroad station. I came here in July of '58 and started riding the train in that month. So, it was there at least a year when I came here. But it was all boarded up. I wish that I had been more aware because I would have salvaged some of the remnants.

Shidler – Right.

Edlund – Uh, and in the Town Office there are two Garrett Park signs, which went on each end of the old railroad station. I don't know if they were original or not but they were salvaged. I found one in an antique shop up in...outside of Frederick (Md). Uh, the first one I found was in an antique shop outside of Frederick and I bought it in the antique shop and brought it back to the Town Office. And the second one, of course, came after Haile Chisholm moved. And I think Rich Cabot...I think Rich Cabot turned them in or he found it in the barn after they bought Haile Chisholm's house. So, we got the two signs married together and they're now in the Town Office. But the train station was there when I was first riding the train.

Glidden-Boyle - Maybe that could be done during the Centennial because...

Shidler – Well, there are a lot of things that are going to be done...that's...Yes that would be very nice. You should propose that to the next meeting.

Glidden-Boyle – I just did (laughing).

Shidler – You just did!

Edlund – You've got to stop playing so much tennis and devote a little more time to town.

Shidler – You talked about Haile and one of the questions we ask everybody is "Town Characters I Have Known" and you certainly know a couple of them, at least one. Did you have any...no; you didn't live close to them.

Edlund – He was our oilman (referring to Haile Chisholm).

Shidler – Oh, he was your oilman?

Edlund – Yes. We had an oil furnace and he used to come any hour of the day or night. He was the oilman around town. He'd have oil delivered on the siding down there and the oil tankard would come and empty themselves at his truck two or three times. Then he sold oil. He sold coal before that I think.

Shidler – Yes.

Edlund – And he was our oilman and he'd come. And the furnace, the oil would run dry at 3 o'clock in the morning and I'd call him and he would shuffle down there with his shoes half-on.

Shidler – Well, that's surprising. Normally, they were off (laughs), by design.

Edlund – (Laughs). I remember he came to see me once with one of his daughters when I was on the Council. Now, I don't remember whether it was when I was on the Council or the next time, it doesn't make any difference. Came to see me with one of his daughters and he was upset about something the Council had done. And he sat there and talked to me. He always called me "Mr. Edlund" and I'd call him "Mr. Chisholm." I was about 1/3 of his age. He'd call me "Mr. Edlund." And, he came with his daughter to complain about something in Town that we still hadn't approved and, uh, he said he didn't agree with me for what we did. And as he was going out the door I said, "Now, Haile, you've got to remember. We have a lot of testy old characters in town to deal with besides you." And he laughed! He laughed and he'd always speak with me.

Shidler – Do you have any problems when...

Edlund – I think that, probably one of the connections may have been he was in the Air Corps. He was in the Army Air Corps and I was in the Army Air Corps. And, uh, I think he was a Captain. And I was in the Army Air Corps. I think that made a connection because he was always very friendly to me and always talked to me and always called me "Mr. Edlund".

I was - speaking of him – I was standing in the street outside of my house one day and a man pulled up the car and I don't remember his name either. And he had apparently grown up in Town and he stopped to talk to me. And he said, "By the way, is Haile Chisholm still living in town?" And I said, "Oh, yeah. He still lives in town." And he said, "Boy, he was a character." He said, "I recall we used to slide down Donnelly's Hill. He'd come out with a barrel of hot wire and melt the ice so the children wouldn't be able to slide." I said, "Well, he probably hasn't changed much since you knew him."

Glidden-Boyle – (Chuckling) I wonder who this was?

Edlund – Well, Haile. Haile. He was a testy old guy.

Shidler – You didn't have any run-ins with him when you were Mayor? How long has he been dead where you noticed that he hadn't been there that long?

Edlund – Well, we'd work out... Glenda had worked out a procedure. I don't know, anytime he'd want something...

Tape ends in mid-sentence.